



Bowman Williams

2023 MSP Salary Guide

Indispensable MSP Salary Statistics
for 32 Mission Critical MSP Jobs

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT PROVIDED BY **ninjaOne**



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About Us



Since 2010, Bowman Williams has exclusively staffed the IT Managed Service Provider (MSP) industry. We've been ranked three times by Forbes List as one of America's Best Recruiting Firms. We've conducted over 12,000 interviews with MSP professionals and successfully helped more than 2,000 MSP professionals land jobs with over 900 MSPs in North America.



NinjaOne simplifies the way IT teams work. With NinjaOne, MSPs and IT departments can automate, manage, and remediate all their endpoint management tasks within one fast, modern, intuitive platform.

A single source
of truth



Salary data gathered from
over 2,500+ interviews

How to Use This Guide

The 2023 Bowman Williams MSP Salary Guide benchmarks salary data and industry intelligence gathered from over 2,500+ interviews conducted with MSP professionals entering the job market between the years of 2020 – 2022.

This guide provides the MSP industry unparalleled intelligence on salary data to make informed hiring decisions; MSPs can scope salary data apprised of the latest compensation trends for 32 different MSP job titles/positions, evaluate price point differentials between primary and peripheral skill sets and run a cost analysis hiring local vs fully remote MSP employees.

Trends & Insights Takeaways

The average MSP starting salary increased 14% from 2020 to 2022.

MSPs are saving 11-20% when hiring L2 and L3 remote employees; up to \$14k per hire.

Nearly 6 in 10 MSPs anticipate increasing their number of remote employees.

In 2022, nearly 3 of 4 MSP hiring placements were hybrid or fully remote.

The MSP Labor Landscape

MSPs
save

11%
-
20%

BY HIRING
REMOTE

Trends & Insights

It's an endless debate, but one thing we can all hang our hats on is that we can thank the mini surge in public cloud services, specifically video collaboration during the pandemic, for the substantial divergence in how MSPs think about hiring. A movement was brewing and the work from home model accelerated faster than most MSPs could reasonably adapt. The large-scale transition from traditional, collocated work environments to employing a dispersed workforce shook MSP hiring norms. Then against a backdrop of volatility, the benefits gleaned from the work from home model accrued disproportionately, leaving MSP candidates holding all the cards. What can salary data tell us about emerging candidate trends and the future of the MSP labor landscape?

Without question, employing a geographically dispersed workforce can offer two notable benefits to MSP employers; talent will be more accessible because you're casting a wider net and employing talent residing in lower cost of living areas can reduce overhead. The benefits are quantifiable but not always mutually exclusive and there are two schools of thought.

MSPs are saving 11% to 20% hiring fully remote Level 3s and Level 2s, respectively. Compared to the average starting salaries of the same positions working in a hybrid or in office capacity, that's equivalent to approximately a \$14,000 savings in salary per hire. In contrast, rather than reaping the benefits from hiring talent residing in lower cost of living areas, over 22% of MSPs opted to leverage the benefits of the widened candidate pool exclusively for accessing better talent, regardless of the price tag. Even with many MSPs gunning for top talent living in lower cost of living areas, it's not uncommon for senior MSP candidates to relinquish accepting the highest paying job offer in lieu of increased work from home flexibility. Offering competitive wages is no longer a sure-fire strategy for attracting or retaining top talent, yet the average MSP starting salary continues to climb.

While most U.S. industries grappled with the "mass resignation" after the pandemic, the MSP industry faced the great workforce "migration;" a massive reshuffle of MSP talent. This reshuffle drove competing offers, higher salaries and louder cries for increased work life balance.

continued →

The MSP Labor Landscape

73%

OF ALL
MSP
PLACEMENTS
WERE HYBRID
OR FULL
REMOTE

Trends & Insights *(continued)*

The average MSP starting salary has increased by 14% between 2020 to 2022; that's six times the 10-year average inflation rate. But as we've learned, salary isn't always the trump card. We surveyed over 500 MSP Professionals entering the job market in Q1 2023. Desiring more work from home days was the second most popular reason why MSP professionals decidedly hit the MSP job market in 2023, beating out career growth and advancing technical skills. Work life balance was only second to desiring more money, and not by much. Only 15% more MSP professionals prioritized desiring a higher compensation over increased work life balance when entering the MSP job market.

But MSPs are not offering full remote opportunities just to keep their employees happy. MSPs are cashing in on the benefits and show no signs of slowing down. The strongest signifier that the MSP hybrid workplace is not shrinking – or just an aberration – is the consistent year-over-year percentage of MSPs bolstering their work from home staff. It was exactly the same percentage in mid-2022 as it was in early 2023; 58% of 250 MSPs surveyed anticipated

increasing the number of people they employed working fully remote. And the survey results corroborates the salary data we've collected; in 2022, 73% of all Bowman Williams placements were hired to work in a hybrid or full remote capacity, leaving only 27% of hires still working in the office five days a week.

The demand for MSP talent will always be cyclical, but starting salaries and hybrid work schedules are now in relative stasis. Our key finding is that the MSP industry is no longer in a state of massive transformation. But change is constant, progress is not. Progressing with the times means adapting to the forces afflicting the modern labor market. And adaptive strategies for bringing in shiny new talent is only part of the equation. We need market intelligence to make informed hiring and retention decisions – we need salary data.



JOHN DAVENJAY
FOUNDER/CEO



**Less than 10% of employees
want to go back to five
days a week in the office.**

[SEE MORE STATS IN NINJAONE'S HYBRID WORK REPORT](#)

Interpreting the Data

The 2023 MSP Salary Guide presents salary data in three different diagrams. Each diagram is a different schematic representation of the data and each diagram was calculated using standard deviation (think bell curve). That means, each diagram was created using the same statistical modality (standard deviation) but presents the data in three types of diagrams summarizing the same data differently.

For example, a table chart presents the mean (average), range and median of the salary data. A table chart provides a summary of the numerical results for how salary data is commonly distributed from the average, while a floating bar graph represents the same data visually so readers can more easily identify changes and trends.

Interpreting the Data *(continued)*

RANGE (MIN-HIGH)	AVERAGE
\$75,686 - \$89,314	\$82,500
\$88,540 - \$93,960	\$91,250
\$89,625 - \$93,707	\$91,666

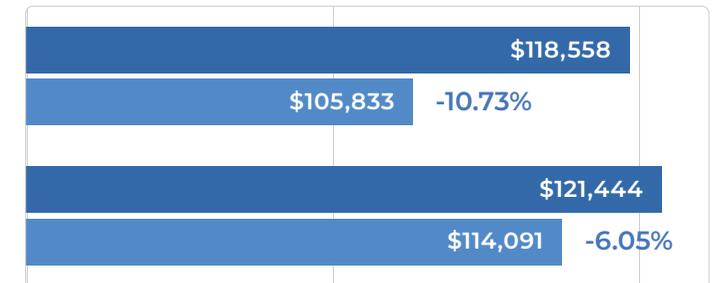
Table Chart

A table chart is an easy to digest summary of the numerical salary data ordered in columns and rows and standard deviation was used to calculate each numerical value: average salary, median salary and salary range. The median salary is the middle salary figure when the data set is ordered from highest to lowest, and the salary range is the highest and lowest starting salaries falling 34% above the average salary and 34% below the average salary.



Floating Bar Graph

A floating bar graph is a visual representation of the same numerical data found in the table chart. A floating bar graph displays salary data ranges by plotting the lowest salary and highest salary on the Y axis, thus providing a quick visual of the delta (difference).



Horizontal Bar Graph

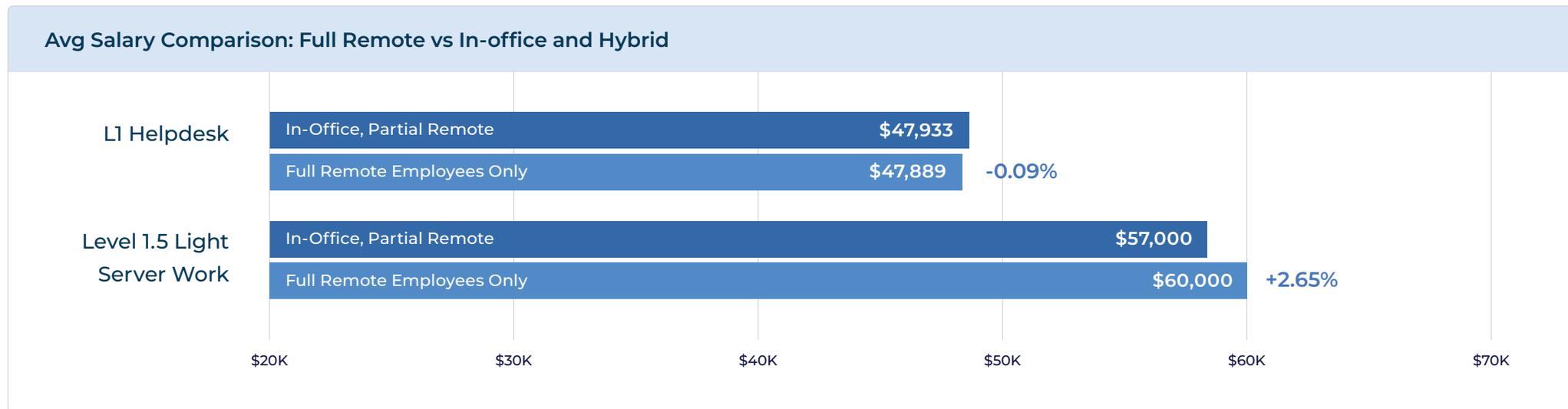
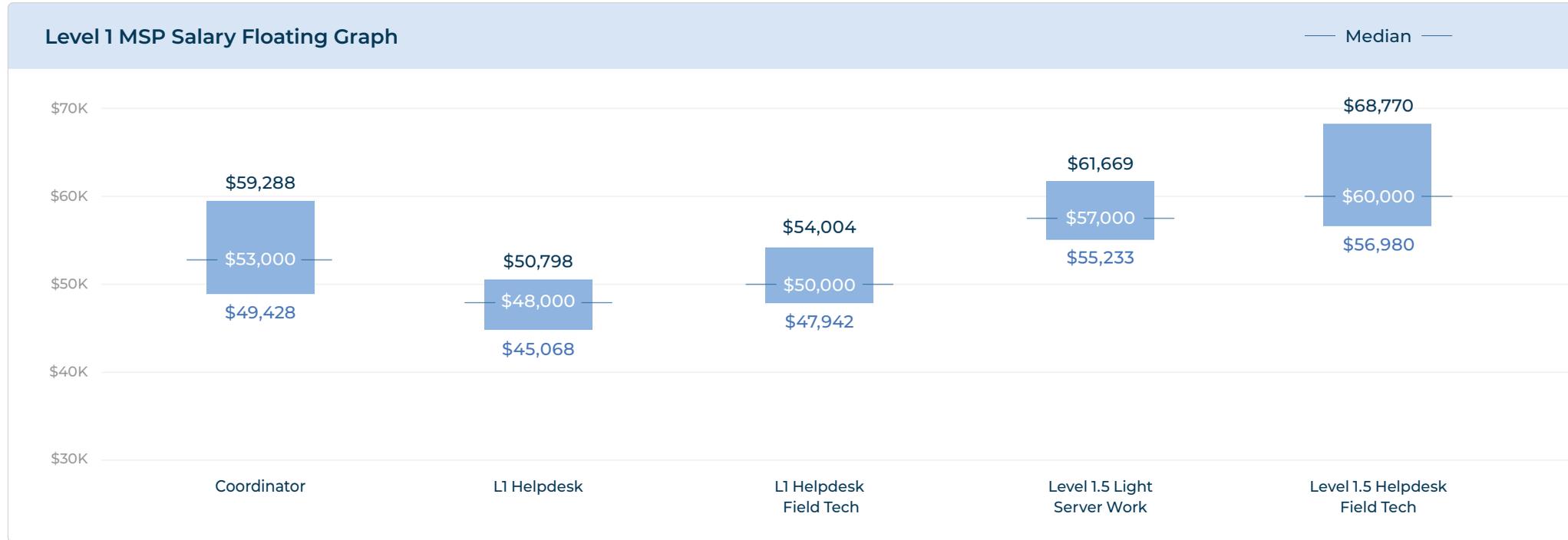
A horizontal bar graph is a visual representation of the difference between the average starting salary of an MSP professional hired to work Fully Remote vs Office. Each horizontal bar graph compares the three MSP job titles/functions that are hired most often to work Fully Remote at the junior, mid and senior level. The insights gleaned from the horizontal bar graph provides MSP hiring managers and MSP professionals market intelligence on how employing fully remote MSP employees – or working as a fully remote MSP employee – can impact starting salaries.

Level 1

Level 1s working for a Managed Service Provider are best described as first-response, reactive support to end-user computer issues isolated to one end user. Level 1s typically work remotely, delivering technical support over the phone and through PSAs/RMMs. Level 1s generally close 15+ tickets daily with quick resolution times.

Level 1s deal with common technical issues: password resets, email errors, printer issues, internet connectivity issues, hardware installations and configurations, and rack and stack/cabling. Level 1s will encounter common technologies: Active Directory, Windows OS, MacOS, M365, G-Suite, VPN, Windows Server, Hypervisors, DNS, and Azure AD. Customer service skills are necessary to be a capable Level 1.

Level 1 MSP Salaries	RANGE (MIN-HIGH)	AVERAGE	MEDIAN
Coordinator	\$49,428 - \$59,288	\$54,358	\$53,000
L1 Helpdesk	\$45,068 - \$50,798	\$47,933	\$48,000
L1 Helpdesk Field Tech	\$47,942 - \$54,004	\$50,973	\$50,000
Level 1.5 Light Server Work	\$55,233 - \$61,669	\$58,451	\$57,000
Level 1.5 Helpdesk Field Tech	\$56,980 - \$68,770	\$62,875	\$60,000
Full Remote Level 1s	RANGE (MIN-HIGH)	AVERAGE	MEDIAN
L1 Helpdesk	\$44,004 - \$51,774	\$47,889	\$48,000
Level 1.5 Light Server Work	\$55,000 - \$65,000	\$60,000	\$60,000



The MSP Labor Landscape



Level 1 Hiring Insights

In 2022, 65% of all Level 1s were hired to work either in a hybrid or full remote capacity: 45% Hybrid vs. 20% hired to work fully Remote.

Full Remote L1s have a higher starting salary than L1s hired to work in Hybrid or Office capacity. Hiring fully remote employees increases the size of the candidate pool and MSPs opted for paying higher salaries for the more experienced and mature L1 talent that is often best equipped to work autonomously from home.

Full Remote Coordinators have a higher starting salary compared to Coordinators hired to work Hybrid or Office. Many MSPs battle with sourcing experienced

proven MSP Coordinators interested in staying in a coordination role. Since hiring Coordinators to work in a Full Remote capacity greatly increased the talent pool, MSPs opted to hire - and pay more - for the best Coordinator talent, rather than saving money offering lower salaries to Coordinator candidates living in lower cost of living areas.

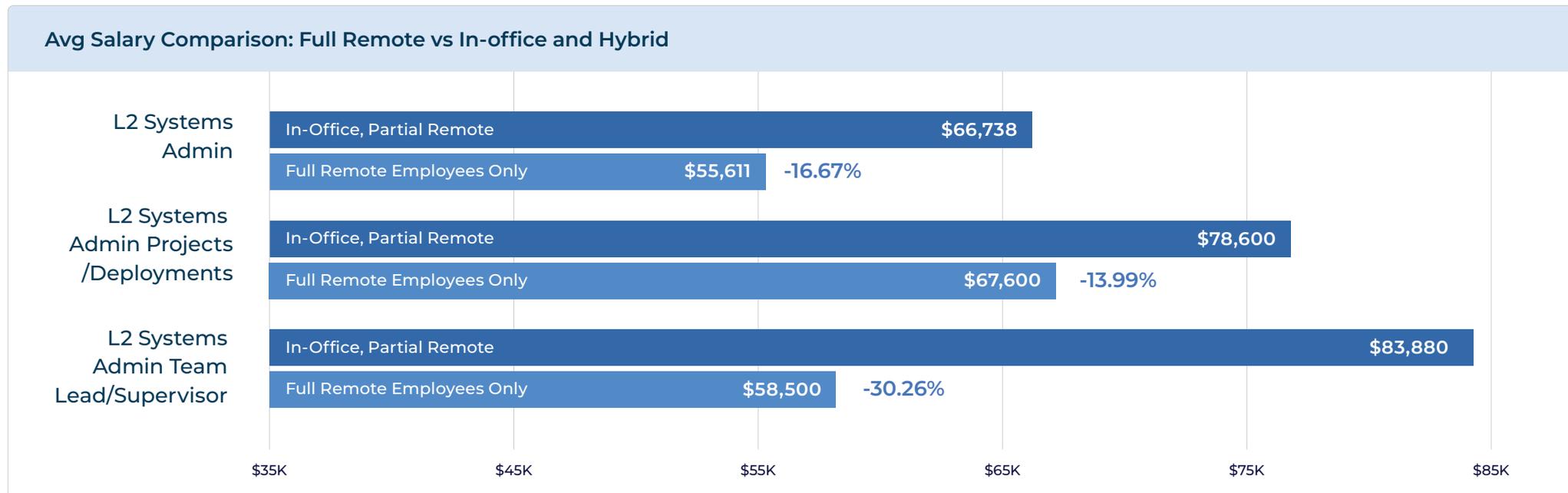
The Level 1 Field Technician had the greatest year-over-year salary increase of all the MSP Level 1 profiles. The L1 Field Tech starting salary increased by 17.71% between 2021 and 2022. More than 50% of all MSP L1s are currently hired to work in either a Hybrid or Full Remote capacity, so experienced - and willing - L1 Field Techs have since become a "rare breed" that costs more to source and retain.

Level 2

Level 2s working for a Managed Service Provider can handle all Level 1 tasks and typically close escalations or tickets assigned by a Dispatcher/Coordinator. Level 2 tickets include complex end-user support issues and system-wide administration requiring a more profound knowledge of servers, virtualization, networking, and public/private cloud.

Level 2s can operate more autonomously than Level 1s, remotely, and on client sites (client-facing role). Level 2s generally assist with project-based work, e.g., Exchange to M365 migrations, office moves, Azure migrations, and network configurations.

Level 2 MSP Salaries	RANGE (MIN-HIGH)	AVERAGE	MEDIAN
L2 Systems Admin	\$62,467 - \$71,009	\$66,738	\$65,520
L2 Field Engineer	\$68,960 - \$76,040	\$72,500	\$70,000
L2 Technology Alignment Manager	\$66,938 - \$79,506	\$73,222	\$72,000
L2 Systems Admin Automation & Scripting	\$67,482 - \$83,318	\$75,400	\$80,000
L2 Systems Admin Projects / Deployments	\$74,694 - \$82,506	\$78,600	\$76,960
L2 Systems Admin Team Lead / Supervisor	\$74,749 - \$93,011	\$83,880	\$80,000
L2 Cloud Systems Admin	\$80,757 - \$87,029	\$83,893	\$82,000
Full Remote Level 2s	RANGE (MIN-HIGH)	AVERAGE	MEDIAN
L2 Systems Admin	\$50,455 - \$60,767	\$55,611	\$55,000
L2 Systems Admin Projects / Deployments	\$61,981 - \$73,219	\$67,600	\$70,000



The MSP Labor Landscape



Level 2 Hiring Insights

In 2022, 74% of all Level 2 datapoints were hired to work either in a hybrid or full remote capacity: 33% Hybrid vs. 41% hired to work full Remote.

The average starting salary for all Level 2 MSP candidates hired fully remote was 26.56% less than the Level 2 MSP candidates hired to work Hybrid or In Office. Hiring L2s from lower cost of living areas, such as Dallas, TX, has become a common L2 hiring strategy.

Level 2 Sys Admin Team Lead / Supervisor candidates hired to work fully Remote have a starting salary that is 30.26% less than those L2 Team Lead / Supervisors hired to work Hybrid or In Office. Hiring Fully Remote L2 Sys Admin Team Leads has one of the largest salary differentials of any MSP employee compared to Hybrid or Office.

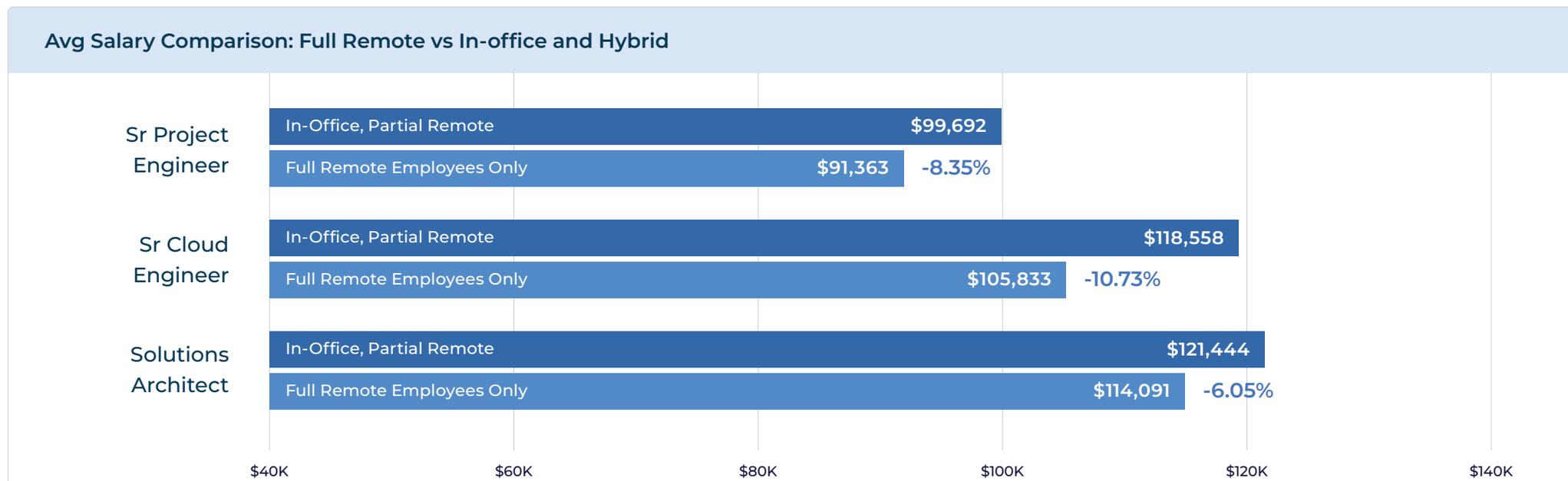
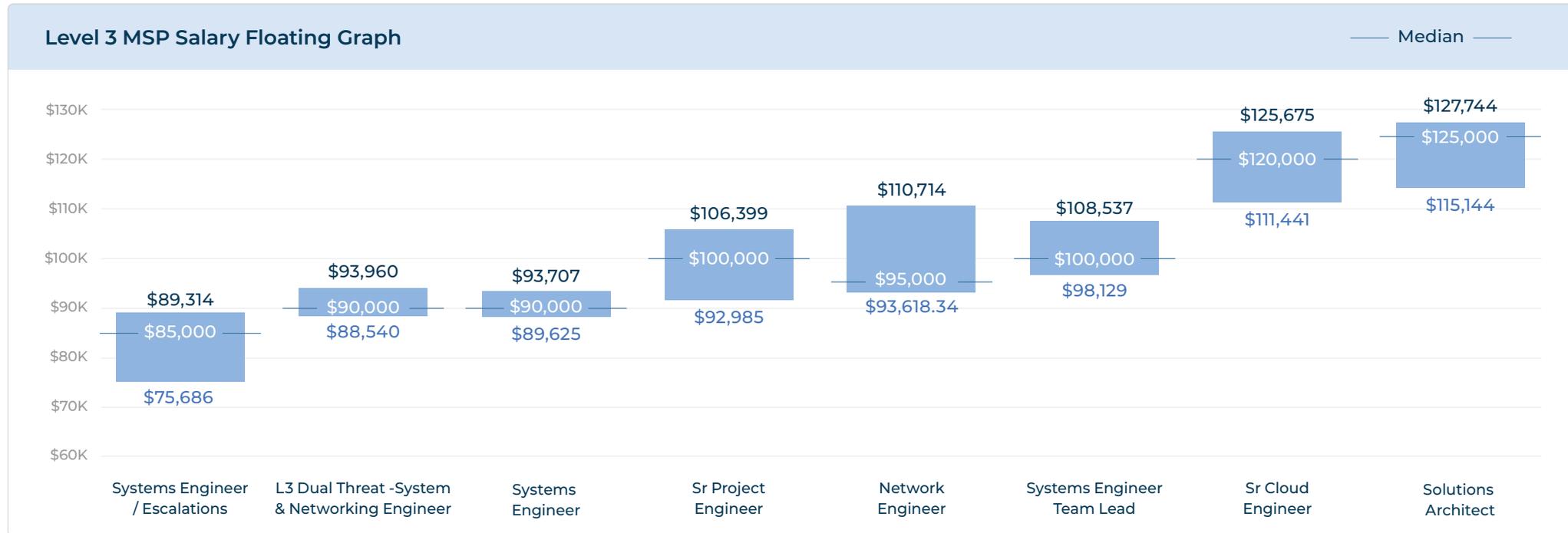
The Level 2 Systems Admin continues to be the most hired - and most in demand - MSP profile.

Level 3

Level 3s working for a Managed Service Provider can handle all Level 1 & 2 tasks. They are generally the technical backstop for escalations while simultaneously completing projects related to a client's overall IT infrastructure. Due to the complexity of the tickets, Level 3s typically close six or fewer tickets daily. Level 3s tend to become more siloed to either Managed Services or Professional Services when working at larger Managed Service Providers.

Level 3s know how to research, determine root causes, and develop long-term solutions (not band-aid fixes). Level 3s have advanced knowledge of servers, virtualization, networking, public/private cloud, and cyber security. They leverage this knowledge to provide IT direction to clients' C-levels to create best-fit solutions.

Level 3 MSP Salaries	RANGE (MIN-HIGH)	AVERAGE	MEDIAN
Systems Engineer / Escalations	\$75,686 - \$89,314	\$82,500	\$85,000
Level 3 Dual Threat - System & Networking Engineer	\$88,540 - \$93,960	\$91,250	\$90,000
Systems Engineer	\$89,625 - \$93,707	\$91,666	\$90,000
Sr Project Engineer	\$92,985 - \$106,399	\$99,692	\$100,000
Network Engineer	\$93,618 - \$110,714	\$102,166	\$95,000
Systems Engineer Team Lead	\$98,129 - \$108,537	\$103,333	\$100,000
Sr Cloud Engineer	\$111,441 - \$125,675	\$118,558	\$120,000
Solutions Architect	\$115,144 - \$127,744	\$121,444	\$125,000
Remote Level 3s	RANGE (MIN-HIGH)	AVERAGE	MEDIAN
Sr Project Engineer	\$85,230 - \$97,496	\$91,363	\$95,000
Sr Cloud Engineer	\$100,491 - \$111,175	\$105,833	\$95,000



The MSP Labor Landscape



Level 3 Hiring Insights

In 2022, 79% of all Level 3s datapoints were hired to work either in a hybrid or full remote capacity: 34% Hybrid vs. 35% hired to work fully Remote.

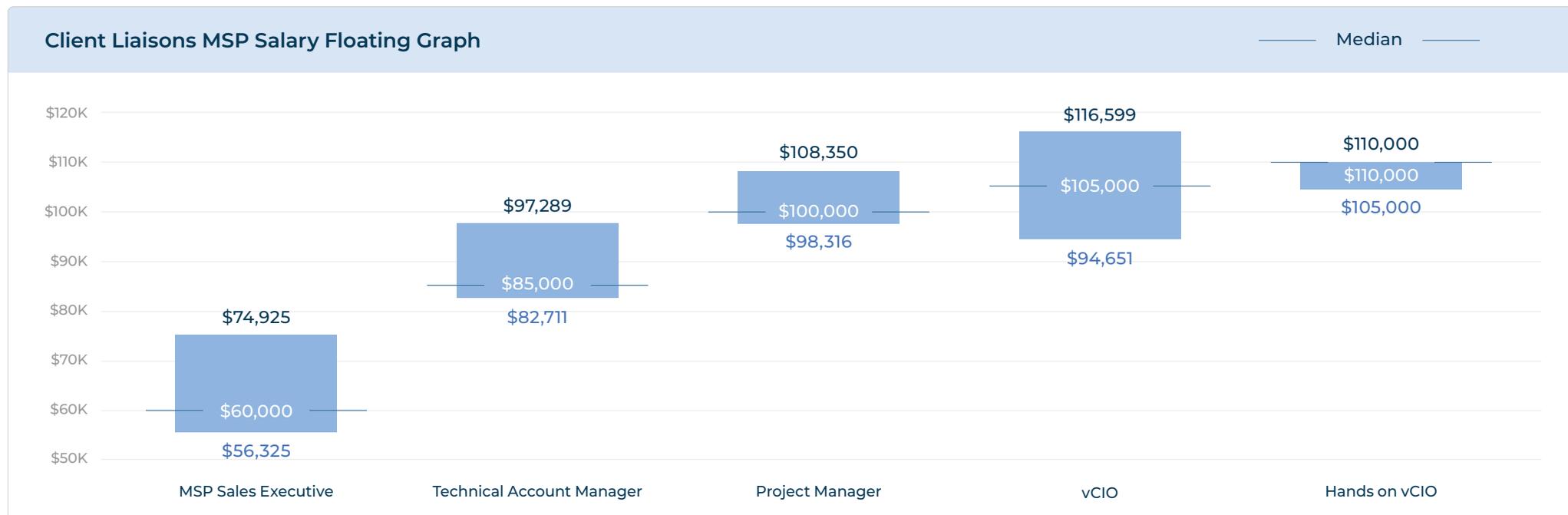
Level 3 Project Engineers have the greatest demand increase year-over-year. Around 39% of all MSP hires were Senior Project Engineers in 2022 (and even Q1 2023); the demand to hire Sr Project Engineers spiked by 26% in 2022 compared to 2021 and 2020.

The average starting salary of a Level 3 Senior Cloud Engineer hired full Remote is 12% less than those who worked Hybrid or Office.

Client Liaisons

Bowman Williams saw the demand for Technical Account Managers (TAMs) increase by 300% 2020 to 2022.

Client Liaisons MSP Salaries	RANGE (MIN-HIGH)	AVERAGE	MEDIAN
MSP Sales Executive	\$56,325 - \$74,925	\$65,625	\$60,000
Technical Account Manager	\$82,711 - \$97,289	\$90,000	\$85,000
Project Manager	\$98,316 - \$108,350	\$103,333	\$100,000
vCIO	\$94,651 - \$116,599	\$105,625	\$105,000
Hands on vCIO	\$105,000 - \$110,000	\$107,500	\$110,000

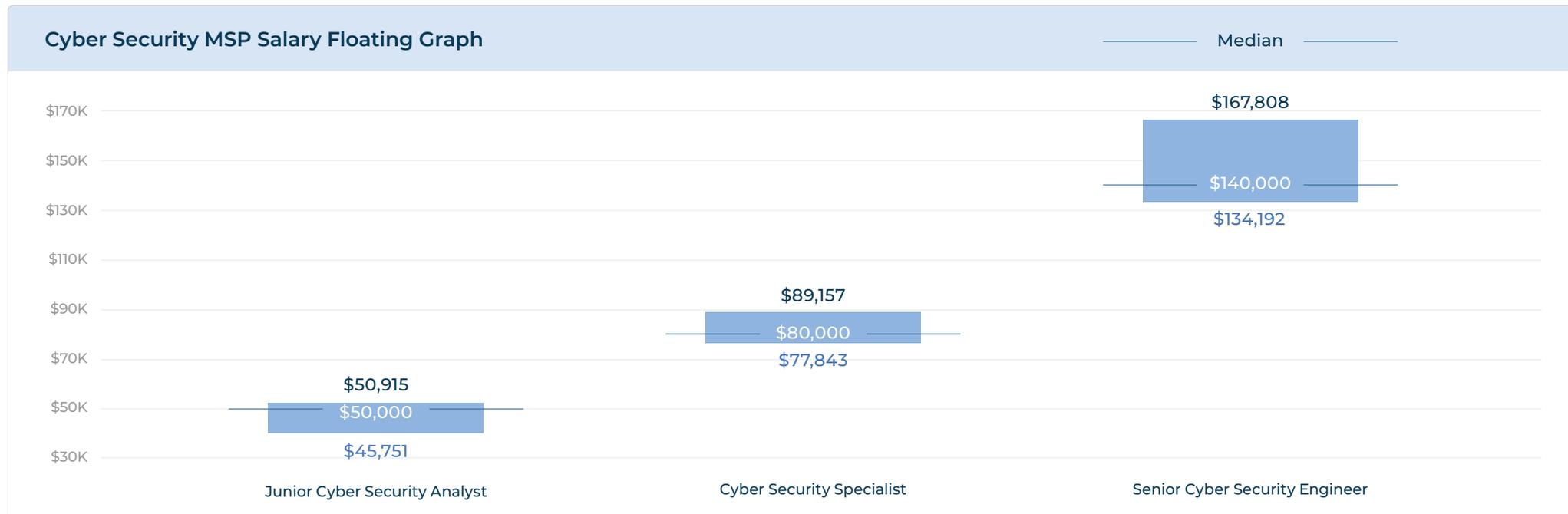


Given the various commission structures offered across the MSP industry, MSP Sales Executive salary data is strictly base salary. Commissions were not factored in.

Cyber Security

Bowman Williams saw the demand for Cyber Security Engineers/Analysts increase by 18% from 2020 to 2022; Senior Cyber Security Engineers are one of the most highly compensated MSP employee profiles.

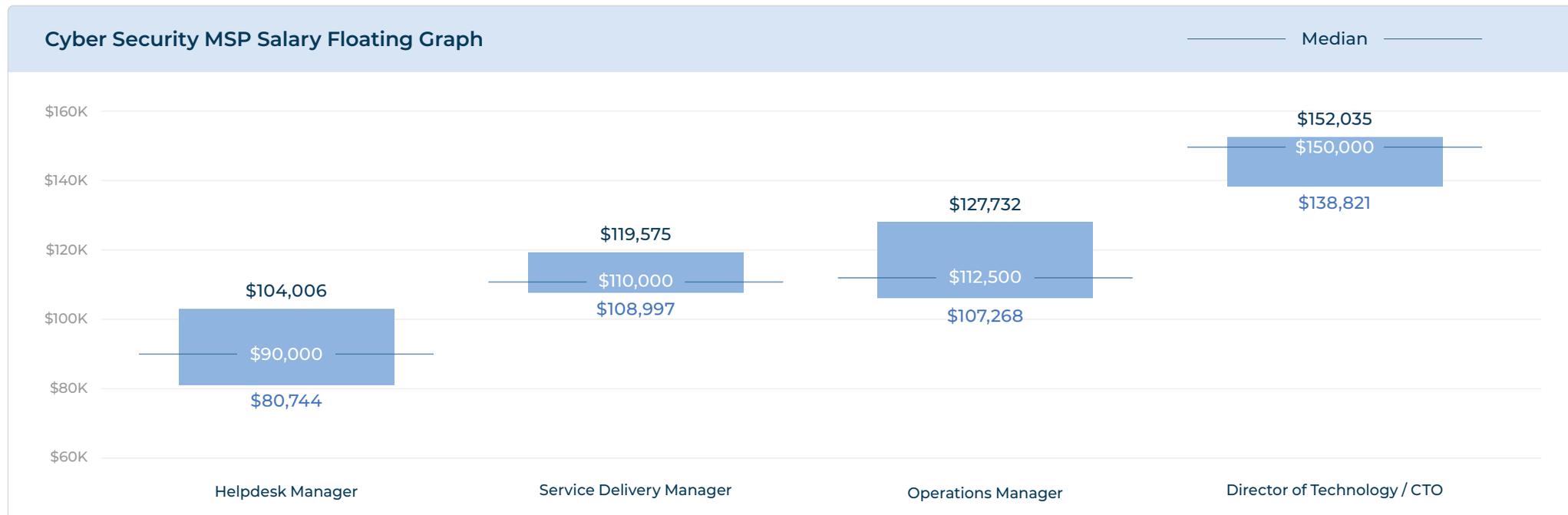
Cyber Security MSP Salaries	RANGE (MIN-HIGH)	AVERAGE	MEDIAN
Junior Cyber Security Analyst	\$45,751 - \$50,915	\$48,333	\$50,000
Cyber Security Specialist	\$77,843 - \$89,157	\$83,500	\$80,000
Senior Cyber Security Engineer	\$134,192 - \$167,808	\$151,000	\$140,000



Management

Help Desk Managers are the most hired – and most in demand – MSP Management profile. 39% of all the Management Profiles hired between the years of 2020 – 2022 were Help Desk Managers.

Management MSP Salaries	RANGE (MIN-HIGH)	AVERAGE	MEDIAN
Helpdesk Manager	\$80,744 - \$104,006	\$92,375	\$90,000
Service Delivery Manager	\$108,997 - \$119,575	\$114,286	\$110,000
Operations Manager	\$107,268 - \$127,732	\$117,500	\$112,500
Director of Technology / CTO	\$138,821 - \$152,035	\$145,428	\$150,000





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